

CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS

Volume IV

May, 1933

Number 5

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**Official Publication Issued Monthly by the
California State Department of Education**

Entered as second-class matter May 8, 1930, at the Post Office at Sacramento, California,
under the Act of August 24, 1912

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Contemporary Life and a New Education

VIERLING KERSEY, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*

THE DEMANDS OF CONTEMPORARY LIFE

That which we see about us is not the end of our social order but it is the end of the weak and faulty in that social order.

Recent changes in underlying conceptions of education in California have given promise of a type of educational philosophy and control which will have closer contact with the realities of present day life than was possessed by our old theories and our controlling traditions.

The lag in school practice, particularly on the secondary school level, due to inertia, to the maintenance of old, outworn conceptions of the "cultivated gentlemen," the "educated man," the "cultured class," prevents any recognition within the school of the part played by actual American life as it is lived in our community, our commonwealth, and our nation.

The period of reconstruction which is indicative of the present day challenge to those who look to the future with optimism and who see a conservation of American ideals, a preservation of the democracy of public education, and the survival of a dynamic, courageous, forward-looking people, would indicate that characteristics of contemporary life which issue mandate to secondary education are:

(1) This is the first period in the history of the world when in a democratic form of government the great masses, the common people, have control and participation in the expression of the direction of the course of democracy. The important decisions in political life have been handed over to the ordinary, the average, the great run of American manhood. That ordinary man hitherto told what kind and amount of education shall be provided is now determined to settle that question for himself. Is it not our responsibility to assist, so that what he imposes upon himself is not crude, inadequate, vulgar, or dangerous?

(2) Life in this modern period has been distinguished chiefly by its departure from spiritual to material interests. The end of an epoch, the emerging new era, is now picturing return to spiritual values.

(3) Contemporary American life has stimulated individual energy and ambition to an exaggerated degree. The rather specialized office

which the secondary school has fulfilled, namely, that of providing youth with technical, intellectual equipment, which only the school was in a position to provide under the increasingly complex conditions of our life, has failed in large measure to integrate the individual with the highly socialized conditions and activities of modern life.

(4) Contemporary life quite positively conveys the conviction that the greatest potential socializing factor in that life is secondary education. The greatest current challenge to social planning which is presented by our contemporary life is that of so reorganizing the entire scheme of economic controls that the common man shall be not merely a producer but also a consumer of the world's goods. Excessive profit must be prevented in order that the power to consume may be more widely distributed among all who participate in production.

(5) A characteristic though puzzling phase of contemporary life is that which may be described as the awakening national consciousness which bids fair to supplant civic complacency with active interest and direct action. The American people are essentially progressive and democratic. There is ample reason to believe that they will not long continue to be misled against their own best interests either by false propaganda or by unreasoned resentment. The ambition of the mass is daring. In the conflict between the two forces those desiring to extend democracy and those desiring to restrict democracy the decision of the common man must give the answer.

SECONDARY EDUCATION IN RELATION TO THE DEMANDS OF CONTEMPORARY LIFE

It is at once proper that we should face frankly the fact that the secondary school will not contribute, with any degree of influence or even significance, to the reconstruction of the social order until it undertakes a program of reconstruction of its own philosophy and procedures. As secondary education faces a contemporary life which represents not merely financial bankruptcy but intellectual and spiritual bankruptcy as well, we sense that whatever American life may have contributed by way of education in and out of school, the result has been an American mind formed to deal with things rather than ideas; with profits rather than advantages; with materials rather than concepts.

Secondary education, the new secondary education, must recognize that a strong society is produced by developing a strong socialized individualism. Getting lost as an individual in the great maze of secondary school offerings is a tragedy of this day.

A shift in emphasis in secondary education is demanded from credits, units, courses, subjects, to acceptance of the thing which contemporary life expects of secondary education—that the secondary school will orient the student in the life of which he is a part and which he is to be. Secondary school graduates must be more capable of controlling environment rather than being controlled by or victimized by it. Secondary school graduates must be more able to control self in relationship to environment.

(1) It is imperative that each secondary school rewrite during these days the plan which will guide relationships of secondary school youth to mental, emotional, and physical health, recreation, sports, play, and well-rounded self-expression. This new secondary school which is to be the product and the agency of contemporary life, must guarantee full personal development to its graduates through a planned, living program of physical expression, emotional control, and mental activity.

(2) Acquaintance with and related experiences in the field or ordinary economic activities should be provided. These should develop safety controls in matters having to do with making investments, conserving savings, enjoying and profiting through wise expenditures, proper responsibilities in earning and production relationships. All modern civilization is coping with the problem of determining the proper economic relationships of society and the individual.

A purpose in civic life mightier than any man and worthy of all men must control the new generation whose task it is to restore statesmanship to American politics. Not only must education and educators engage in living the new statesmanship but it must be a part of a teaching program.

Education must make a new politics.

Sovereignty of the unqualified must, by education, be changed to the sovereignty of the qualified.

THE PERFORMANCE OF THESE TASKS BY THE NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL

Our view of the new secondary education turns at once to the machinery of that level of public education.

An immediate challenge to administrators in secondary education is that of building a program to accomplish the newly stated purposes. This involves almost a complete rebuilding of the machinery by which the new objectives of secondary education are to be attained. This task is a more severe test of creative leadership than any recently imposed upon school administrators.

Our program for the reconstruction of the secondary school involves positive action. It imposes upon the secondary school administrator a responsibility for creative endeavor. It places before him a series of definite tasks which must be performed. Among these the most important are:

(1) The construction of a new curriculum. This curriculum shall be built of the problems and activities of the individual children themselves.

(2) The retraining of teachers in service to equip them to understand the newer purposes of secondary education and to guide and direct the learning activities of children.

(3) The minimizing of the importance and inhibiting effects of such controlling traditions as college entrance requirements and the domination by college influences over the purposes and curricula of the secondary schools; the employment of such devices as units, credits, teachers' marks, and pupil failure as criteria for promotion and admission to higher levels; and the use of discipline as a means of inhibition and repression.

(4) The discarding of obsolete equipment and practices which serve only to obstruct the development of adequate new secondary school programs.

(5) The utilization of all available social and civic agencies of the community for the enrichment of the school offering; and the integration of the activities of the secondary school into all constructive phases of community life.

(6) The maintenance, throughout the secondary school period, of high standards of conduct and accomplishment, in accordance with individual abilities, in all social relationships.

These are but a few of the specific responsibilities devolving upon the secondary school administrator in the performance of our task of reconstructing the public secondary school to satisfy the demands of contemporary life. The socialization of the entire program and curriculum; recognition and development of the individual both as a person and as a social unit; transformation of teaching into the guidance of learning; these are some of the results to be attained.



Ellwood Patterson Cubberley

Dr. Ellwood Patterson Cubberley will retire from active service on his sixty-fifth birthday, June 6, 1933, after 35 years of educational service to the state and nation. Dr. Cubberley has attained national eminence as a great leader and a frontier thinker in education. His retirement marks the conclusion of definite responsibilities in the administration of the School of Education at Stanford University but this release from arduous and intensive work will mean a new opportunity to contribute dynamically to the solution of urgent educational problems confronting contemporary social life.

The work of Dr. Cubberley has been characterized by an extensive interest in the many phases of education. He is most widely known as an author in the field of educational administration and in the history of education. His books have exercised a powerful influence over educational thought and practice throughout the country. As editor of the Riverside Textbooks in education, a series now totaling nearly

100 volumes, Dr. Cubberley has been instrumental in furnishing the educational world with a collection of authoritative literature covering nearly every aspect of the field of education. Through his contribution as writer and editor he has assumed a position of foremost rank among the educators of the country.

As head of the education department for 19 years and as Dean of the School of Education for 16 years at Stanford University, Dr. Cubberley's strong executive ability has made this institution one of the leading centers of training in the United States.

Even though recognition of Dr. Cubberley on a nation-wide scale may be due chiefly to his contribution as writer, editor, and dean of a school of education, his work as a teacher is no less important a factor in his greatness. He is loved and respected by hundreds of students from all parts of the United States and foreign countries who have been enrolled in his classes. Many of these former students now occupy important and strategic positions in public school systems and in colleges and universities throughout this country and foreign countries. In the final analysis perhaps his broadest influence will flow through the lives and work of those who were privileged to be his students. The personal encouragement, the stimulation of a truly great teacher, and the inspiration to serve humanity through education that came from his leadership will have immeasurable and far reaching effect for many years in promoting world progress and advancement.

California in particular owes a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Cubberley. He has been one of the state's ablest and most powerful influences for educational progress. The Report of the Special Legislative Committee on Education for California, written in 1920 by Dr. Cubberley, set forth principles of organization and administration which are still recognized as essential to the solution of problems which are as acute today as when the report was made. Dr. Cubberley has been fearless and courageous in the face of strong opposition in advocating changes necessary for the improvement of the state system of education throughout his career in California.

It is with regret that we look upon the retirement of Dr. Cubberley, a great teacher and educational statesman. The retirement of Dr. Cubberley would be an overwhelming loss to education in California and in the United States were it not that his activities as a writer and editor of professional literature guarantee the continuity of his service to the cause of education.

With vision based on knowledge and humanized by experience, with true perspective derived from keen observation of educational history in its greatest period of change and expansion, Dr. Cubberley may be expected to continue as a leading force in educational progress.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS

Commission for Vocational Education

J. C. BESWICK, Assistant Executive Officer

RESOLUTION CONCERNING NON-COMPETITIVE ACTIVITIES OF PRINTING CLASSES

At the Annual Conference of Local Directors and Supervisors of Vocational Education, held in Sacramento, March 27-31, 1933, a resolution was submitted and passed by the group relative to all printing classes organized in the state. The resolution contained the following provisions:

1. That all printing classes be organized for instructional purposes only;
2. That the equipment be limited to the minimum needs for instructional purposes, and not be increased to take care of production work;
3. That no outside work be solicited or accepted;
4. That no school print shop be in competition with any local printing industry;
5. That under no circumstances should the production of the printing classes be sold by the school department or by the pupils in these classes; and
6. That the size of the printing program carried on in the print shop be in direct relationship to the training needs of the industry within the employing area.

It has always been the policy of the State Department of Education, and the state department has always recommended to local school administrators, that school print shops confine all of their production work to meeting the needs of the local school systems and that there be no competition with any local industry.

While this particular resolution deals with printing, the same principle is applicable to any other field of instruction, or any other occupation in which training is given as a part of the secondary school program.

The State Department of Education wishes to caution school administrators against any appearance of competition of minors against adult workers. This is especially important in times of stress like the present, when labor and industry are on the alert for any indication of such possible competition.

INTERPRETATIONS OF SCHOOL LAW

Appellate Court Decisions

Attendance of High School Pupils

Under School Code section 3.309, no high school pupil residing in a joint high school district may attend in another high school district if the terms of admission of such pupil have not been agreed upon as provided in School Code section 3.302. The school district of residence has a valuable interest in the attendance of pupils within it. It is not necessary that the district of residence first attempt to reach an agreement with the district of attendance concerning the admission of pupils from the district of residence to the district of attendance before maintaining an action to prevent the attendance of pupils in the district of attendance.

(*Laton Joint Union High School District etc. vs. Armstead et al.*, 73 C. A. D. 46, -- Pac. ---)

Authority to Compromise Claims

Where a contract between a school district and a contractor for the construction of a school building was let by competitive bidding and the contract provided that certain stipulated liquidated damages should be allowed to the district for each day the building remained uncompleted after the date specified in the contract for completion, and the district claimed, as against the contractor, liquidated damages in a certain sum, the governing board of the district had no authority to compromise its claim when the consideration for the compromise was that the subcontractors and materialmen would be paid amounts due them from the contractor, since such a compromise constituted a gift of the public funds of the school district and was therefore void under section 31 of Article IV of the Constitution.

(*Hamilton etc., vs. Oakland School District etc., et al.*, 73 C. A. D. 1, --- Pac. ----)

Attorney General's Opinions

Amendment of Tenure Law

The language of School Code section 5.406 would prevent a teacher who had gained permanent tenure in the state from objecting on lawful grounds to an amendment to the tenure law which would take away rights of tenure already earned by a teacher.

(Letter of Attorney General to E. W. Mattoon, April 12, 1933.)

Appeals from California Interscholastic Federation

The State Supervisor of Physical Education has no jurisdiction under School Code sections 3.738 and 3.740-3.742, to entertain an appeal by a high school district from a ruling of the Council of the California Interscholastic Federation.

(Letter of Attorney General to E. W. Mattoon, November 30, 1932.)

Insurance of Employees of Retirement Board

The Public School Teachers Retirement Salary Fund Board has no authority under section 48, Deering Act 4748, to insure its liability under the Workmen's Compensation, Insurance and Safety Act of 1917 with the State Compensation Insurance Fund. (A. G. O. 8512, April 12, 1933.)

Purchase of School Buses

A school district may purchase a school bus constructed under patents covering a substantial portion of the bus, and costing in excess of \$500 without complying with the provisions of School Code sections 6.30 and 6.31. (A. G. O. 8535, April 4, 1933.)

Receipts of Athletic Contests

Funds received by the student body of a high school representing earnings from athletic contests are not public funds.

(Letter of Attorney General to E. W. Mattoon, November 30, 1932.)

School District Warrants

A school district warrant, when registered under School Code sections 4.320-4.334, is not subject to any statute of limitations, inasmuch as their registration would seem to make it payable whenever funds become available therefor. A failure to present a registered warrant within the time fixed by School Code section 4.333 would, however, if the warrant would be entitled to the same consideration as an unregistered warrant.

There is no limit of time within which unregistered warrants must be presented for payment. (A. G. O. 8511, March 22, 1933.)

Support of California Nautical School

Any unexpended balance in the San Francisco Harbor Improvement Fund, other than funds raised by bond issues, may be appropriated by the Legislature by appropriate legislation for the support of the California State Nautical School, but no funds of the State Board of Pilot Commissioners may, under Article I, section 10, of the Federal Constitution, be used for such purpose. (A. G. O. 8547, April 13, 1933.)

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS USEFUL TO TEACHERS

Attention is directed to the following circulars listing United States Government Publications of use to teachers. Single copies of circulars in the series are free from the Office of Education, Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C. Additional copies are five cents each.

U. S. Government Publications of Use to Teachers of Geography, Circular No. 28 Revised.

U. S. Government Publications Useful to Teachers of Science, Circular No. 48.

U. S. Government Publications Useful to Teachers of Home Economics, Circular No. 50.

U. S. Government Publications Useful in Health Education, Circular No. 51.

U. S. Government Publications Useful to Parents and Leaders in Parent Education, Circular No. 54.

U. S. Government Publications Useful in Physical Education and Recreation, Circular No. 68.

U. S. Government Publications Showing the Work of the Government, Circular No. 78.

CALIFORNIA CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

The annual convention of the California division of the American Association of University Women will be held at the Hotel Senator in Sacramento May 26 and 27, 1933. Dr. Katherine McHale, a professor at Goucher College and General Director of the National Association, will be the chief speaker at the convention.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY PLAN FOR ADMITTING SELECTED GROUP OF FRESHMEN

Northwestern University last year inaugurated a plan for admitting a limited number of specially gifted high school graduates of 13, 14, and 15 years of age. In September, 1933, a similar group will be admitted.

Special plans have been developed for guiding the training of these precocious students according to their individual interests and abilities and special dormitory facilities for them have been arranged.

No scholarships are especially assigned to the group. If there is need for financial assistance applications may be made for regular freshman scholarships. Students may register in any of the undergraduate schools on the Evanston campus which includes the college of liberal arts, the school of education, the school of engineering, the school of music, and the school of speech. Transfer is made later to the professional schools of law, medicine, dentistry, commerce, and journalism. Inquiries should be addressed to Dr. Grace E. Manson, University Hall, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

TRAINING FOR TEACHERS OF SIGHT SAVING CLASSES

The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness announces that in order to prepare teachers and supervisors for work in sight saving classes, training courses will be offered during the summer of 1933 at:

Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, June 19-July 28, 1933.

University College, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, June 26-August 1, 1933.

Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N. Y., July 10-August 18, 1933.

A course will probably be offered also at:

State Teachers College, Buffalo, N. Y.

EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTS

National Education Association

The Joint Committee on the Emergency in Education, sponsored by the National Education Association, in a series of radio programs is appealing to the people to maintain educational opportunities for their children. A schedule has been arranged for broadcasting these programs at different hours of the day to meet the convenience of large numbers of persons. Although all speakers are not yet assigned it is impractical to withhold announcement of these programs until they are definitely scheduled. However, every program will present a prominent American familiar with the field he discusses and thoroughly in sympathy with the cause of public education.

Addresses will be delivered on the following schedule:

May 2-11:00-11:15 a.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the Columbia Broadcasting System

12:45- 1:00 p.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the National Broadcasting Company

- May 6— 4:00- 4:15 p.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the National Broadcasting Company
- May 8—11:30 a.m.-12:00 m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the National Broadcasting Company
- May 9—11:00-11:15 a.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast Stations of the Columbia Broadcasting System
- May 11—10:45-11:00 a.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the National Broadcasting Company
- May 13— 4:00- 4:15 p.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast Stations of the National Broadcasting Company
- May 15— 9:35- 9:45 a.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the National Broadcasting Company
- May 18—11:30 a.m.-12:00 m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the National Broadcasting Company
- May 20— 4:00- 4:15 p.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the National Broadcasting Company
- May 22— 9:35- 9:45 a.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the National Broadcasting Company
- May 27— 4:00- 4:15 p.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the National Broadcasting Company
- May 29— 9:35- 9:45 a.m., Pacific Standard Time over Pacific Coast stations of the National Broadcasting Company

University of California

The University of California directs attention to the new schedule of broadcasts. Programs are now released daily, except Saturdays and Sundays, at 3:45 p.m., over a chain of National Broadcasting Company stations, including KPO, San Francisco; KECA, Los Angeles; and KFSD, San Diego. The Monday programs deal with Fundamentals of Music; on Tuesdays, the New Education will be discussed; Wednesdays, Vocations for which the University Offers Training; Thursdays, Current Business Problems; Fridays, the World Economic Conference.

The program in detail for May and June for The New Education follows:

- May 9—WHAT IS EDUCATION?
Sir John Adams, Lecturer in Education
- May 16—MUST EDUCATION SUFFER A DEPRESSION?
Frederick P. Woellner, Associate Professor of Education
- May 23—PAYING FOR OUR SCHOOLS.
Marvin L. Darsie, Professor of Education and Dean of the Teachers College

May 30—HAVE PARENTS BECOME SUPERFLUOUS?

Barbara Greenwood, Associate in Education, Primary and Kindergarten,
and Supervisor of Nursery School Training

June 6—THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE, CHILD, PARENT, TEACHER.

Katherine L. McLaughlin, Associate Professor of Education

June 13—WHO IS THE EFFICIENT TEACHER?

Charles W. Waddell, Professor of Education and Director of the Train-
ing Department

June 20—CREATIVE ABILITIES OF CHILDREN.

Frances Giddings, Instructor in Kindergarten-Primary Education, and
Supervisor of Training, Kindergarten and Primary

June 27—WHAT IS PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION?

Junius Merriam, Professor of Education

Programs are presented over stations KPO, KECA, and KFSD each Sunday evening from 9.30 to 10.00. The College of Agriculture programs are presented Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:15 p.m., over stations KGO, KFI, and KFSD.

PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE

REVIEWS

CLIFFORD WOODY and PAUL V. SANGREN. *Administration of the Testing Program*. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Company, 1933. xi + 397 pp.

This new addition to the literature on tests and measurements is "designed to serve as a manual of instructions for those having the responsibility of directing a testing program." The authors state that in preparing the book they have endeavored to answer questions which have been directed to them as directors of research bureaus. Most previous books on tests and measurements have treated primarily such phases as characteristics of the new type examination, measures of validity and reliability, test construction, statistical treatment of test results, and have prevented detailed descriptions of representative tests, but have devoted scant attention to the problem of organization and administration of a testing program. In treating this latter phase, this book performs an important function.

There is a mass of detailed information in connection with testing programs well known to the research director who has learned it through actual experience in administering test programs. Such details rarely if ever are discussed in textbooks on tests and measurements or in the directions accompanying standard tests. The school principal suddenly confronted with the responsibility for conducting a testing program has little to guide him in formulating comprehensive plans. He is forced to learn through experience and mistakes. As a practical guide for conducting a testing program this book makes a valuable contribution. Although prepared for individuals with relatively little training in tests and measurements, the book contains a wealth of practical information which the more advanced student will find extremely useful in applying the more technical information acquired through previous study.

Chapter One on the Meaning of the Testing Movement presents in brief form a background which serves as an orientation to the field of tests and measurements.

Chapter Two on the Testing Program commences with a discussion of two distinct purposes of testing programs; (1) appraisal, and (2) improvement of instruction. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a treatment of planning testing programs for schools or school systems so as to accomplish definitely specified purposes. Such factors as existing machinery for the administration of a program, previous experience of teachers with tests and test techniques, previous policies, and community attitudes, which often limit the extent to which a testing program may be carried, and which are influential in determining the effectiveness of the program are given well warranted attention. The generally accepted criteria for selecting tests are stated and suggestions offered for applying them.

Chapter Three on Administering and Scoring the Tests Constituting the program is a very practical guide for anyone who must manage a test program. Many seemingly small details, not covered by the printed directions accompanying the tests and not to be found in texts on tests and measurements but absolutely essential for coordinating the activities of the testing program, are excellently treated.

The next three chapters deal with tabulating, presenting, and interpreting test results. This practical phase of testing has received insufficient attention in previous volumes to assure that the readers will be able to carry on this essential part of the program in an effective manner. The reader in these chapters is given in minute detail the steps and procedures necessary for properly tabulating and presenting test data so that they may be readily interpreted and used effectively for improving instruction. Illustrations of tables and graphs are generously presented. In the book as a whole 59 tables and 48 figures are presented in addition to illustrations of text material. The excellent treatment in these three chapters is worthy of special commendation.

The use of test results for improving instruction through administrative changes with special attention to classifying pupils for instruction and forming special classes is discussed in Chapter Seven. Chapter Eight deals with utilizing test results for improving instruction through pedagogical changes. Valuable suggestions for conducting teachers meetings on the subject of the testing program are offered. The use of tests for diagnostic purposes as the basis of remedial instruction receives special emphasis.

Chapter Nine, entitled Acquainting the Public with Existing Levels of Efficiency within the Schools contains valuable suggestions for directors of testing programs to use in programs designed to keep the public informed concerning the effectiveness of the modern school program.

Chapter Ten on Dangers to be Avoided in Using Tests and Test Results is particularly timely. Criticisms directed at testing procedures usually are occasioned because of misuse of tests and misapplication of test results. The authors have effectively pointed out the dangers in such practices as unnecessarily extensive testing programs, failure to use test results in improving instruction, rating teachers on the basis of the accomplishment quotients of pupils, failure to consider the validity and reliability of the tests in using the results, and comparing non-comparable test scores.

The book closes with a chapter on present tendencies in measurement wherein the more recent developments of the testing movement are briefly described and their place in the testing movement discussed.

The most significant contribution of the book lies in the treatment of everyday practical problems connected with the organization and administration of testing programs. Throughout the volume, emphasis is placed on the utilization of tests for the accomplishment of educational purposes. Tests and test results are viewed not merely as interesting facts isolated from educational procedures, but as practical means for better adapting the instructional program to the pupils. This spirit and attitude so prominent throughout the book should contribute materially to the advancement of the testing movement. School principals and superintendents of small systems without the specialized services of research departments should find this book particularly useful.

IVAN R. WATERMAN

LULA E. WRIGHT. *A First Grade at Work. A Non-Reading Curriculum.* New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1932. xi + 242 pp.

The "educative moment" at which children are filled with a desire to learn to read has been the subject of much controversial discussion and the basis for many research studies. Teachers of young children and administrators responsible for economy in planning are concerned with the social, physical, emotional, and intellectual aspects of this problem of reading readiness. Great strides have been made during the last ten years, but the majority practice in elementary education supports a first grade curriculum with reading as a center.

This book, which presents a non-reading curriculum, deals but briefly with the psychological side of the problem. Its purpose is to record an investigation into the type of program best fitted for six year old children. The bulk of the book therefore is devoted to actual records of the reactions of young children engaged in meaningful activities in a first grade classroom. The program consists of first hand experiences which will bring complete satisfaction to children, and no provision is made for the teaching of reading or writing during this first year in school. The teacher continued with the class the second year and based the beginning reading on the experiences common to the group.

Miss Wright has shown the development of the individual children exposed to this type of non-reading program in a most skilful way by recording actual conversation, changed attitudes, widening interests, and enlarged vocabularies. The centers of interest which absorbed this group of children ranged from boats and airplanes

to cooking and frogs. Through dramatic play children were given an opportunity to express their ideas and feelings. They were continually changing their personalities, and through this medium consciously or unconsciously trying to understand life about them. They became aviators, lions, butterflies, policemen, the wind, or their fathers going to work. This part of the program served to integrate the intellectual content and the cultural appreciations to which their first hand experiences had made them sensitive.

Miss Wright, in her investigation, looked for such outcomes as increased concentration and perseverance, the ability to follow simple directions and to recall whatever is important in previous learnings for the comprehension of new problems, in these six year old children. She aimed to secure physical control and social and emotional stability.

She has contributed a record of real education in an environment conducive to learning. The tools of learning have been subordinated until the child shall have a need for them in meaningful situations. She sets forth the belief that each child should be considered a law unto himself and that reading should not be superimposed upon him until a desire to read has been fully demonstrated.

The twenty page annotated bibliography includes books suitable for first grade children and for the aid of teachers carrying on an activity program. In addition, a bibliography pertaining to the mooted question of the age at which reading should be taught is a part of the addenda.

For teachers who do not believe in teaching reading in the first grade and for those who desire a non-reading curriculum for foreign, immature, or low-readiness children, this book offers a practical program which has proved effective in an actual situation.

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